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County Employment and Wages in New Jersey - Fourth Quarter 2013

Wages grew in 7 of the 15 largest counties in New Jersey over the year in the fourth quarter of 2013, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2012 annual average employment.) Union County posted the largest increase, with a gain of 5.2 percent, followed by Morris County, up 5.0 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table 1](#).) Chief Regional Economist Martin Kohli noted that both the Union and Morris County wage increases ranked in the top 10 nationwide.

Eleven of New Jersey's large counties reported average weekly wages above the \$1,000 national average in the fourth quarter of 2013. Average weekly wages in Morris and Somerset exceeded \$1,400.

Chart 1. Large counties ranked by percent increase in average weekly wages, fourth quarter 2012-13

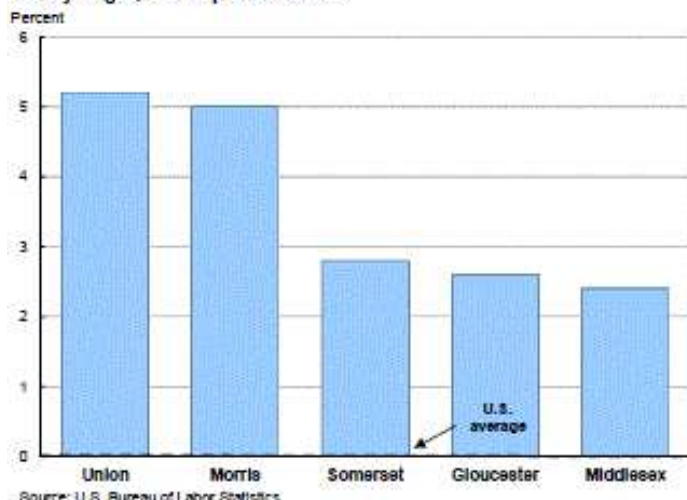
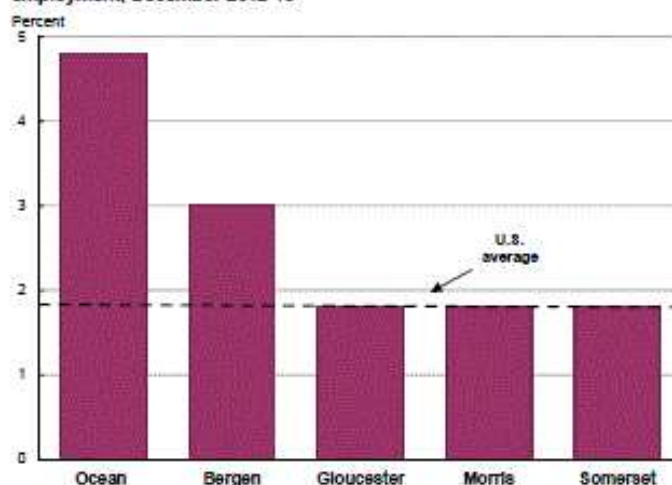


Chart 2. Large counties ranked by percent increase in employment, December 2012-13



The largest employment gain among New Jersey's largest counties was in Ocean, up 4.8 percent. Nationally employment grew by 1.8 percent from December 2012 to December 2013. (See [chart 2](#).)

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the six counties in New Jersey with employment below 75,000. Two of these counties had average wages above \$1,000. Cape May County reported the lowest average weekly wage, \$732. (See [table 2](#).)

Large County Wage Changes

Of the seven counties in New Jersey that experienced wage increases, Union (5.2 percent) and Morris (5.0 percent) posted gains that ranked fourth and sixth, respectively, among the 334 largest U.S. counties. Four additional counties—Somerset, Gloucester, Middlesex, and Camden—posted gains of at least two percent. Conversely, seven New Jersey counties experienced over-the-year wage losses. Ocean County's 1.8-percent loss ranked 299th and Bergen's 2.7-percent decline ranked 317th. Nationally, the average weekly wage was unchanged over the year.

Among the 334 largest counties nationwide, 185 recorded growth in average weekly wages. Santa Cruz, Calif., had the largest wage increase among the largest U.S. counties (6.5 percent). In contrast, 140 counties experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. The largest over-the-year wage decline was a loss of 29.7 percent in Douglas, Colo.

Large County Average Weekly Wages

As noted, 11 of New Jersey's large counties reported average weekly wages above the national average. New Jersey's three highest-paying counties—Morris, Somerset, and Mercer—ranked among the nation's top 20. Atlantic County reported weekly wages of \$813, the lowest of all New Jersey's large counties, and ranked in the bottom quartile at 270th.

Nationally, 98 large counties registered average weekly wages above the U.S. average of \$1,000 in the fourth quarter of 2013. San Mateo, Calif., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties with an average weekly wage of \$2,724. New York, N.Y., was second at \$2,041, followed by Santa Clara, Calif. (\$1,972).

Among the 235 counties with an average weekly wage below the U.S. average since December 2012, Horry County, S.C., reported the nation's lowest wage (\$587), followed by the Texas counties of Cameron (\$598) and Hidalgo (\$620).

Large County Employment

Employment grew in 10 of the 15 largest counties in New Jersey from December 2012 to December 2013. Ocean (4.8 percent) and Bergen (3.0 percent) were the only large counties in New Jersey to post increases above the national job growth rate of 1.8 percent. Passaic (-0.8) and Atlantic (-0.9) experienced the largest over-the-year employment losses.

Nationally, employment grew in 292 of 334 large U.S. counties. Weld, Co., posted the largest percentage increase in employment with a gain of 6.0 percent over the year. St. Claire, Ill., experienced the largest over-the-year decrease with a loss of 3.1 percent.

In New Jersey, employment was highest in Bergen (446,100), followed by Middlesex (397,200), and Essex (338,100). Altogether, New Jersey's large counties accounted for 91.1 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 334 largest counties made up 71.7 percent of total U.S. employment.

Average Weekly Wages in New Jersey's Smaller Counties

Two of New Jersey's six counties with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages above the national average. Hunterdon reported the highest average weekly wage at \$1,133, followed by Salem at \$1,015. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 21 counties in New Jersey were considered, 8 had an average weekly wage above \$1,150. All of these counties were clustered in northern and central New Jersey. Counties with average weekly wages below \$850 were located in southeastern New Jersey. (See [chart 3](#).)

Additional Statistics and Other Information

QCEW data for states has been included in this release in [table 3](#). For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the Technical Note or visit the QCEW Web site at www.bls.gov/cew/.

An annual bulletin, *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online*, features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2012 edition of this bulletin, which was published in September 2013, contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2013 version of the news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2012* are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn12.htm. The 2013 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages* will be available in September 2014.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 800-877-8339.

County employment and wage data for the first quarter 2014 are scheduled to be released on Thursday, September 18, 2014.

Technical Note

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) legislation and provided by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). The 9.3 million employer reports cover 136.1 million full- and part-time workers. The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing quarterly total wages by the average of the three monthly employment levels of those covered by UI programs. The result is then divided by 13, the number of weeks in a quarter. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for reasons other than changes in the average wage level. Data for all states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cew/; however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised and may not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site.

QCEW data are not designed as a time series. QCEW data are simply the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. Establishments can move in or out of a county or industry for a number of reasons—some reflecting economic events, others reflecting administrative changes.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. These potential differences result from the states' continuing receipt, review and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 15 largest counties in New Jersey, fourth quarter 2013

Area	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2013 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2012-13 ⁽²⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, third quarter 2012-13 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	136,129.4	1.8	\$1,000	--	0.0	--
New Jersey	3,887.5	1.2	1,186	5	1.1	14
Atlantic	130.4	-0.9	813	270	0.0	186
Bergen	446.1	3.0	1,240	27	-2.7	317
Burlington	198.0	-0.2	1,029	80	-0.5	226
Camden	198.0	1.4	1,025	81	2.0	47
Essex	338.1	-0.4	1,237	28	1.4	75
Gloucester	100.4	1.8	901	175	2.6	28
Hudson	239.9	0.3	1,284	23	-0.6	232
Mercer	235.3	1.0	1,290	20	-1.6	289
Middlesex	397.2	0.3	1,186	39	2.4	31
Monmouth	246.9	1.7	1,034	77	-0.4	220
Morris	283.3	1.8	1,553	10	5.0	6
Ocean	154.5	4.8	826	253	-1.8	299
Passaic	171.9	-0.8	990	109	-1.1	257
Somerset	179.3	1.8	1,484	11	2.8	24
Union	223.3	-0.5	1,283	24	5.2	4

⁽¹⁾ Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

⁽²⁾ Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

⁽³⁾ Ranking does not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

⁽⁴⁾ Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Note: Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in New Jersey, fourth quarter 2013

Area	Employment December 2013 (thousands)	Average weekly wage (¹)
United States (²)	136,129.4	\$1,000
New Jersey.....	3,887.5	1,186
Atlantic.....	130.4	813
Bergen.....	446.1	1,240
Burlington.....	198.0	1,029
Camden.....	198.0	1,025
Cape May.....	34.4	732
Cumberland.....	58.5	839
Essex.....	338.1	1,237
Gloucester.....	100.4	901
Hudson.....	239.9	1,284
Hunterdon.....	47.8	1,133
Mercer.....	235.3	1,290
Middlesex.....	397.2	1,186
Monmouth.....	246.9	1,034
Morris.....	283.3	1,553
Ocean.....	154.5	826
Passaic.....	171.9	990
Salem.....	20.7	1,015
Somerset.....	179.3	1,484
Sussex.....	38.5	851
Union.....	223.3	1,283
Warren.....	34.0	932

(¹) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(²) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Note: Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, fourth quarter 2013

Area	Employment	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2013 (thousands)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2012-13	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	136,129.4	\$1,000	--	0.0	--
Alabama	1,866.5	851	34	-0.5	39
Alaska	315.1	1,022	14	1.6	7
Arizona	2,571.0	906	23	-0.5	39
Arkansas	1,154.3	771	47	0.4	22
California	15,650.3	1,175	6	-0.9	43
Colorado	2,383.9	1,023	13	-0.9	43
Connecticut	1,661.2	1,238	4	-1.3	49
Delaware	419.6	1,035	9	-0.6	41
District of Columbia	727.3	1,638	1	-3.9	51
Florida	7,739.5	883	29	0.2	27
Georgia	3,986.9	924	21	-0.1	32
Hawaii	632.9	871	30	0.3	25
Idaho	634.5	754	50	3.0	2
Illinois	5,758.9	1,060	8	0.2	27
Indiana	2,896.9	814	40	-0.2	35
Iowa	1,510.9	834	38	1.6	7
Kansas	1,359.5	832	39	-0.4	38
Kentucky	1,818.0	804	42	0.2	27
Louisiana	1,911.6	889	26	0.5	20
Maine	586.8	786	46	1.7	5
Maryland	2,555.1	1,076	7	-0.9	43
Massachusetts	3,332.9	1,258	3	0.8	17
Michigan	4,072.4	952	20	-0.2	35
Minnesota	2,720.6	988	16	0.3	25
Mississippi	1,108.1	729	51	1.3	11
Missouri	2,670.4	861	32	-0.2	35
Montana	440.0	760	48	0.4	22
Nebraska	944.3	796	43	-0.1	32
Nevada	1,180.5	884	28	0.7	18
New Hampshire	629.3	1,017	15	-0.8	42
New Jersey	3,887.5	1,186	5	1.1	14
New Mexico	796.2	814	40	1.4	10
New York	8,888.6	1,266	2	-1.1	48
North Carolina	4,045.5	860	33	0.7	18
North Dakota	435.0	980	17	3.8	1
Ohio	5,175.4	887	27	0.0	30
Oklahoma	1,581.3	851	34	-0.1	32
Oregon	1,699.6	894	25	2.6	3
Pennsylvania	5,650.3	976	18	0.4	22
Rhode Island	462.7	960	19	1.5	9
South Carolina	1,875.8	793	44	1.0	15
South Dakota	407.1	759	49	1.3	11
Tennessee	2,758.3	895	24	-0.9	43
Texas	11,246.3	1,027	12	0.0	30
Utah	1,284.7	836	37	-0.9	43
Vermont	308.5	848	36	2.3	4
Virginia	3,670.0	1,028	11	-1.3	49
Washington	2,976.0	1,034	10	1.7	5
West Virginia	710.1	792	45	0.5	20
Wisconsin	2,751.8	865	31	1.2	13
Wyoming	279.2	917	22	1.0	15

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, fourth quarter 2013 - Continued

Area	Employment	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2013 (thousands)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2012-13	National ranking by percent change
Puerto Rico.....	958.3	551	(3)	0.2	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	38.5	754	(3)	2.4	(3)

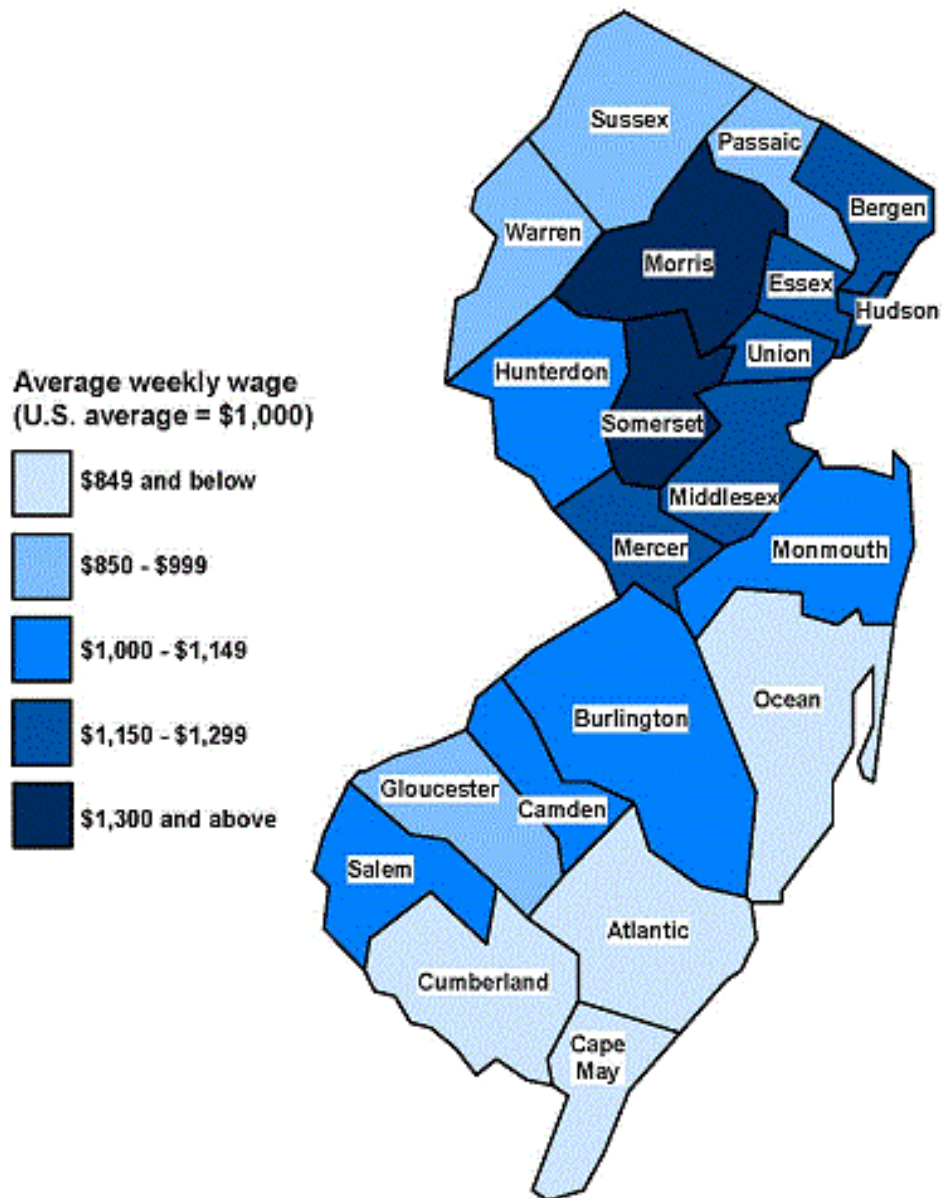
⁽¹⁾ Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

⁽²⁾ Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

⁽³⁾ Data not included in the national ranking.

Note: Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

**Chart 3. Average weekly wages by county
in New Jersey, fourth quarter 2013**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.